

# THE CABINET;

A REPOSITORY OF

## POLITE LITERATURE.

No. VIII.

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BOSTON, SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 1811.

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### MISCELLANY.

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ORIGINAL.

#### THE PERIPATETIC.—No. 3.

TO THE PERIPETATIC.

SIR,

THERE is a restless curiosity in the human mind, which is continually in search of objects of gratification, and wisdom is merely the result of a right direction of this ever active quality. It was the operation of this strong principle, which drew a crowd of disciples to listen to accents of wisdom, from the lips of Aristotle. The Athenian Peripatetics received the lessons of their master and disputed on subjects of philosophy, in walking up and down the Lyceum. In these latter times, more is to be learnt by viewing “the world abroad,” and observations on men and manners, are more conducive to useful knowledge, than all the reasoning of scholastic seclusion.

From your initial number it may be presumed, that you are more desirous of the distinctive appellation of out-door

philosopher and will discourse on subjects of present importance, rather than carry your readers to the lore of "older times." Book wisdom indeed will be found wholly insufficient to prepare a man for commerce with the world.

Believing that a report of the occurrences of daily or weekly importance, convey the lessons of worldly knowledge in a strong and impressive manner, I have collected some of the incidents which acquire importance from locality; and if it be not inconsistent with the plan you may have laid down for the pursuance of your weekly labours, the appearance of a journal, similar to that which I now send you, would afford me no small gratification. If such of the supporters of the Cabinet, who have opportunity for observation, would contribute such sketches of the times, a picture of the state of society might be exhibited, which would excite general interest.

## PERAMBULATOR.

*Journal of a week, containing the chit-chat of fashionable circles.*

## SUNDAY.

ON a day set apart for the purposes of devotion, we will endeavour to believe, that no tongue would utter the transactions of mortality.

## MONDAY.

Such was the effect of a sermon on the excellence of christian charity, delivered yesterday by an eminent divine, in which the importance of succouring the distressed was depicted in glowing language; that Mr. R. this morning loaned several thousand dollars, to a gentleman somewhat embarrassed by the pressure of the times, at the moderate monthly premium of two and a half per cent, although he had been offered on Saturday, three per cent with equal security.

## TUESDAY.

IT is said to be a fact that Mrs. G. alighted from her carriage, at a miserable dwelling during the storm, on hearing the cries of several children; and finding their mother in convulsions, brought on by the arrest of her husband for a small debt, sent immediately for medical assistance, and actually deferring a morning call on a friend who expected her, employed the forenoon in purchasing necessaries for the wretched family. It was even said that Mr. G. had by the solicitations of his lady, been induced to liberate the man from prison, by paying the small sum for which he had been confined, but this was found to be utterly untrue.

## WEDNESDAY.

THE report that Mr. S. had challenged the gentleman who recently called him a *dirty puppy*, is wholly unfounded. Whether the epithet has been so frequently applied, as to cease to disturb the tranquillity of the delicate nerves Mr. S. is supposed to possess, is not distinctly known. Custom renders many things endurable which are in themselves disgusting.

## THURSDAY.

IT was stated in Court street, that a young attorney who had obtained an execution for nearly *two* dollars, against an industrious labourer, who had just recovered from a severe illness and was unable to discharge it, not only relinquished the costs but on the creditor's insisting that the man should be imprisoned, threw the execution into the fire and paid the debt himself. It is added, that the young gentleman has not long been in *the practice of the law*.

## FRIDAY.

IT is said that a gentleman of this town is engaged in writing a work, to be intitled, "The way to wealth, con-

taining directions for avoiding the old impediments of honour and honesty, and still preserving consequence in society." Some sketches of characters who have been eminently successful, in practising on the principles which the author is desirous to establish, are to be introduced.

## SATURDAY.

THE ball last evening was uncommonly brilliant. The presence of a great number of beautiful ladies, the splendour of whose charms vied with the lustre of the illuminated saloon in which they were assembled, and the attendance of His Excellency the Gouvernour, with a train of officers in full uniform, "all booted and spurred," was a splendid tribute to the memory of Washington. Some dozen or fifteen choice spirits feasted on venison at a public house, and "carouz'd potations pottle deep" in honour of the birth day of that immortal patriot and sage.

Happy country! while thy sons and daughters thus remember thy preserver once a year, and eat, and drink, and dance, to his memory, why should thy treasury be drained, to raise monuments of brass or marble in honour of the man, *first in war, first in peace.*



## ON FEMALE EDUCATION.

THE following remarks on the education of females are extracted from the Edinburgh Review. Much has been said and written on this very important subject, but we have seldom read any strictures which afforded us more perfect satisfaction.

A great deal has been said of the original difference of capacity between men and women; as if women were more quick, and men more judicious—as if women were more remarkable for delicacy of association, and men for stronger powers of attention. All this, we confess, appears to us very fanciful. That there is a difference in the understandings of the men and the women we

every day meet with, every body, we suppose, must perceive ; but there is none, surely, which may not be accounted for by the difference of circumstances in which they have been placed, without referring to any conjectural difference of original conformation of mind. As long as boys and girls ran about in the dirt, and trundle hoops together, they are both precisely alike. If you catch up one half of these creatures, and train them to a particular set of actions and opinions, and the other half to a perfectly opposite set, of course their understandings will differ, as one or the other sort of occupations has called this or that talent into action : there is surely no occasion to go into any deeper or more abstruse reasoning, in order to explain so very simple a phenomenon. Taking it then for granted, that nature has been as bountiful of understanding to one sex as the other, it is incumbent on us to consider what are the principal objections commonly made against the communication of a greater share of knowledge to women, than commonly falls to their lot at present ; for, though it may be doubted whether women should learn all that men learn, the immense disparity which now exists between their knowledge, we should hardly think could admit of any rational defence. It is not easy to imagine that there can be any just cause why a woman of forty should be more ignorant than a boy of twelve years of age. If there be any good at all in female ignorance, this (to use a very colloquial phrase) is surely too much of a good thing.

Something in this question must depend, no doubt, upon the leisure which either sex enjoys for the cultivation of their understandings ; and we cannot help thinking that women have fully as much, if not more, idle time upon their hands than men. Women are excluded from all the serious business of the world : men are lawyers, physicians, clergymen, apothecaries, and justices of the peace—sources of exertion which consume a great deal more time than producing and suckling children ; so that, if the thing is a thing that ought to be done—if the attainments of literature are objects really worthy the attention of females, they cannot plead the want of leisure as an excuse for indolence and neglect. The lawyer, who passes his day in exasperating the bickerings of Roe and Doe, is certainly as much engaged as his lady,

who has the whole of the morning before her to correct the children and pay the bills. The apothecary, who rushes from an act of phlebotomy in the western parts of the town to insinuate a bolus in the east, is surely as completely absorbed as that fortunate female who is darning the garment, or preparing the repast of her *Aesculapius* at home ; and, in every degree and situation of life, it seems that men must necessarily be exposed to more serious demands upon their time and attention than can possibly be the case with respect to the other sex. We are speaking always of the fair demands which ought to be made upon the time and attention of women ; for, as the matter now stands, the time of women is considered as worth nothing at all. Daughters are kept to occupations in sewing, patching, mantua-making, and mending, by which it is impossible they can earn ten-pence a-day. The intellectual improvement of women is considered to be of such subordinate importance, that twenty pounds, paid for needle work, would give to a whole family leisure to acquire a fund of real knowledge. They are kept with nimble fingers and vacant understandings, till the season for improvement is utterly passed away, and all chance of forming more important habits completely lost. We do not, therefore, say, that women have more leisure than men, if it be necessary that they should lead the life of artisans ; but we make this assertion only upon the supposition, that it is of some importance that women should be instructed ; and that many ordinary occupations, for which a little money will find a better substitute, should be sacrificed to this consideration.

We bar, in this discussion, any objection which proceeds from the mere novelty of teaching women more than they are already taught. It may be useless that their education should be improved, or it may be pernicious ; and these are the fair grounds on which the questions may be argued. But those who cannot bring their minds to consider such an unusual extension of knowledge without connecting it with some sensation of the ludicrous, should remember, that, in the progress from absolute ignorance, there is a period when cultivation of mind is new to every rank and description of persons. A century ago, who would have be-

lieved that country gentlemen could be brought to read and spell with the ease and accuracy which we now so frequently remark—or supposed, that they could be carried up even to the elements of ancient and modern history? Nothing is more common or more stupid, than to take the actual for the possible—to believe that all which is, is all which can be; first to laugh at every proposed deviation from practice as impossible—then, when it is carried into effect, to be astonished that it did not take place before.

It is said, that the effect of knowledge is to make women pedantic and affected; and, that nothing can be more offensive than to see a woman stepping out of the natural modesty of her sex, to make an ostentatious display of her literary attainments. This may be true enough; but the answer is so trite and obvious that we are almost ashamed to make it. All affectation and display proceed from the supposition of possessing something better than the rest of the world possesses. Nobody is vain of possessing two legs and two arms;—because that is the precise quantity of either sort of limb which every body possesses. Who ever heard a lady boast that she understood French, and though there may be some disgrace in being ignorant of that language, there is little or no merit in its acquisition. Diffuse knowledge generally among women, and you will at once cure the conceit which knowledge occasions while it is rare. Vanity and conceit we shall of course witness in men and women as long as the world endures: but by multiplying the attainments upon which these feelings are founded, you increase the difficulty of indulging them, and render them much more tolerable, by making them the proofs of a much higher merit. When learning ceases to be uncommon among women, learned women will cease to be affected.

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#### PIGEON-FLYING IN VALENCIA.

ON almost every house in Valencia there is a *patomar*, or dove-cote,\* in some of which may be seen thousands of pigeons of every kind and of every colour.

\* These dove-cotes are small quadrangular towers of different heights and dimensions, which are built on the flat roofs, and are often fitted up with great elegance.

Of these the *Raza pigeon* (*Columba tobillarita* of Linnaeus) are the most remarkable for their attachment to their home ; a quality which has given rise to the *trials*, as they are called, and has occasioned them to be made use of as couriers.

The raza pigeon in general returns to its home, not only from a distance of ten or twelve leagues, but even after an interval of two or three years. As this instinct, however, is not equally strong and permanent in all, this circumstance has given occasion to a number of trials, on which considerable wagers are laid, and which are a subject of universal interest and enthusiasm.

These trials are made in the following manner : Two persons furnish a like number of pigeons, four weeks old. These are put into a separate dove-cote, where they are supplied with an abundance of food, and are left perfectly quiet for four or five days.

Scarcely have they become a little used to their new habitations, when they are daily driven out, for some hours, by force ; and this practice is continued for a fortnight. They are then carried to the distance of a league, in a cage, where they are all at once set at liberty, and as their instinct is put to the proof, the person, of whose pigeons the greatest number find their way home, is naturally the winner. If the number should prove equal, the same exercises as before, are repeated for a few days, and preparations are made for a second trial. In case this should not prove decisive, the same mode of proceeding is recurred to for the third, fourth, and even fifth time ; but always at a greater distance, and often as far as twelve leagues. The dangers from birds of prey cannot make any difference, as the pigeons of one party are exposed to them equally with those of the other.

Another kind of trial is made with whole flights, and even in the midst of the cities. To this end two neighbours drive out at the same time all their pigeons, so that they cannot fail to be intermingled. To increase the confusion, both parties, assisted by their neighbours, make all the noise they can, by clapping their hands, rattling, shouting, and firing guns, by which, the two flights are thoroughly mixed with each other, and almost every pair is dispersed and separated. Now comes the moment of the trial, and the decision of a thousand wagers. When the confusion of the two flights is at the highest, each proprietor suddenly recalls his birds to the cote with the usual signal.

The whole cloud of pigeons is now seen wheeling round and round, and separating at first into small groupes, that gradually form two large bodies, each of which repairs to its accustomed habitation.

As some of the birds belonging to either one or the other division, are always slower and less sagacious than the rest, one of the owners cannot fail to loose. Such of his pigeons as find their way into their neighbour's cote, must be redeemed before the end of twenty-four hours, at an established rate a piece, or they are considered as good prizes.

With respect to the carrier-pigeons, the mode of proceeding is nearly the same as in the east. Round the right leg of one of those raza-pigeons, trained for the purpose, is rolled a billet folded up in a narrow slip, and the bird is set at liberty. She flies straight home with incredible velocity, suffers herself to be caught without difficulty, and in two or three days is carried back to her former station.

On important occasions, these carrier pigeons are sometimes of great utility. In the last war, short dispatches

were now and then transmitted by this conveyance, the speed of them being generally seven or eight leagues in the space of forty-three, and fifty minutes.

*Picture of Valencia.*

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*For the CABINET.*

#### THE ROBBER.....A FRAGMENT.

— “The wearied animal can proceed no further,” said the Doctor, as he stopped his horse at the turnpike inn. He entered the bar-room, inwardly cursing the bad roads, which prevented his reaching Salem before night, and seated himself by the blazing fire.—Gloomy were his meditations, which became more horrific at the entrance of two men, whose faces presented to his disturbed imagination pictures of fierce banditti. “Six hundred dollars thought he,—why did I bring it with me,—and to proceed alone,—but perhaps they may not be robbers,—perhaps they may not overtake me,—at any rate I will proceed.”—After an inspiring draught, the journey is recommenced and tremblingly alive is the Doctor to each little noise.—Ha! a robber—and with the deadly weapon aimed at that head, which has so often directed the councils of the commonwealth. And shall a life so precious to the nation, be sacrificed for a little pelf? shall one fell blow, deprive the country of a hero and a statesman? No.—“Take my money, but spare my life,” exclaims the son of Galen; and cast his pocket book at the ruffian’s feet. He waits not for reply, but applies the lash to the jaded steed.—Speed thee, Rosinante, and bear thy master beyond the reach of danger.—The welcome glare of light soon flashes on the Doctor’s eyes. Assistance is procured and a full pursuit of the robber is commenced.—They reach the scene of villainy and *monstrum horrendum*!—the terrific bandit still maintains his post,—the weapon of death is still extended, and the robber had not yet stooped to raise the booty which lay at his feet.—A pump with the handle frozen in a horizontal position, was found to have been mistaken by the sapient Doctor, for a murderous highwayman.

VERUS.

## COLLECTANEA.

### SUSPENSE.

THE uncertainty of suspense is the cause of its ever-increasing pangs. Its fears being enlarged by imagination, augment dread over dread, until every calamity seems bending ; and the terrified wretch, self-betrayed, meets misery in advance, by giving himself up to phantoms of his own raising. In all cases it shews a very ill-judging kindness, to leave any one in anxiety, when it is in our power to decide on the object of it, whether good or bad. If good, it is the cruellest of all robberies to withhold one moment of happiness which is the right of another : and if bad, suspense being at an end, the ranging spirits collect, and form that faculty of bearing a determined and visible evil, which uncertainty and indistinctness totally dissipate. Who is there that would not rather be led out to the axe, than live for days and weeks, with the expectation of death or torture ?

### DRUNKENNESS.

Drunkenness is one of the most degrading, and at the same time, is the most mischievous, of the sensual vices. In point of deformity, it is on a par with gluttony, which seeks enjoyment in gorging a vile appetite, and doing its utmost to extinguish that ethereal part, which alone gives man pre-eminence over brutes.

Drunkenness can have no positive pleasure ; at best, its feelings are all dormant ; if active, they must produce pain. How can any one of the senses find gratification, when the eye-sight is rendered indistinct, the hearing confused, the very motion feeble and undetermined, and every power of man paralised and lost in weakness and stupidity ? The bliss of the drunkard is a visible picture of the expectation of the dying atheist, who hopes no more than to lie down in the grave with the “ beasts that perish.” It is not requisite to describe the actual pains of the poor besotted wretch,

when his swoln carcase awakes to sensibility. When the cup of any sensual pleasure is drained to the bottom, there is always poison in the dregs. Anacreon himself declares, that "the *flowers* swim at the *top* of the bowl!"

To shew the dangers of ebriety, the catholic legends tell us of some hermit to whom the devil gave his choice of *three* crimes. Two of them of a most atrocious kind, and the third to be *drunk*. The poor saint chose the *last*, as the *least* of the three—but—when drunk—committed the other two. The baneful effects of this penurious vice upon the constitution are described by Dr. Darwin in his "*Zoonomia*," under an allegory which would not disgrace the splendid imagination of lord Bacon himself. "Prometheus," says he, "was painted as stealing fire from Heaven; that might well represent the inflammable spirit produced by fermentation, which may be said to animate and enliven the man of clay. Whence the conquests of Bacchus; as well as the temporary mirth and noise of his devotees; but, the *after* punishment of those who steal this accursed fire is a *Vulture gnawing the liver*, and well allegorizes the poor inebriate, lingering, for years, under painful diseases." "Oh! that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains."

#### LOVE.

Among the great misfortunes, and calamities incident to human life, there are none which touch so sensibly as those which befall persons who eminently love, but meet with fatal interruptions of their happiness. The piety of children to parents, the affection of parents to their children, are the effects of *instinct*. But the affection between *lovers* and *friends* is founded on *reason* and *choice*, which has always made me think the sorrows of the latter much more to be pitied than those of the former. The undutiful child, the cruel parent, though characters so common, are *unnatural*. But love and friendship are effusions of the soul, and sublime as its own essence.

## MAXIMS.

All books of maxims are said to be cold; but it is only for the same reason that bolted doors are thought to indicate an inhospitable disposition. When you bar your doors against an horde of robbers, and honest man in distress, may sometimes be left to bear the pelting of the storm ; and a well founded maxim by putting you on your guard against a thousand deceptions, may *once*, perhaps, make you appear unfeeling to the sufferings of real merit.

## PIRON.

Piron has been justly characterized, “the rival friend and terror of Voltaire :” his wit was inexhaustible, and his fund of humour without parallel.

One day, a very ignorant bishop, who was *not* suspected of writing his own sermons, met Piron, and addressed him with an air of great self-complacency—“ Well Piron, have you read my charge to the clergy ?” No my lord, have you ?

## GARRICK.

The celebrated Mrs. Clive was an actress of considerable repute in London, long before Garrick appeared upon the stage. When his genius broke forth in the metropolis, every other performer sunk at once into the shade, and Mrs. Clive, as well as the rest, with all her original merit, fell into comparative insignificance. Her temper was violent, and her manners coarse. She always vented her spleen without restraint upon Garrick, and even affected to deny his merit as an actor. One night, while he was performing Lear, she stood behind the scenes, attending to his performance. Unable, with all her masculine roughness of character, to resist the pathetic touches of his skill, she remained fixed on the spot, sobbing, and abusing him at the same moment; at length, after repeated alternations of tears and curses, wholly overcome by the affecting powers of the great actor before her, she hastily rushed from the place, with the following strange, but expressive tribute to the universality of his skill—“ D——n him, I believe he could *act a gridiron*.”

**POETRY.****BURNS' MARY.**

Of this first love of the poet, we are indebted to Mr. Cromeck for a brief, but very striking account, from the pen of the poet himself. In a note on an early song inscribed to this mistress, he had recorded in a manuscript book—

‘My Highland lassie was a warm-hearted, charming young creature as ever blessed a man with generous love. After a pretty long tract of the most ardent reciprocal attachment, we met, by appointment, on the second Sunday of May, in a sequestered spot by the Banks of Ayr, where we spent the day in taking a farewell, before she should embark for the West-Highlands, to arrange matters among her friends for our projective change of life. At the close of Autumn following, she crossed the sea to meet me at Greenock ; where she had scarce landed when she was seized with a malignant fever, which hurried my dear girl to the grave in a few days, —before I could even hear of her illness.’

Mr. Cromeck has added, in a note, the following interesting particulars ; though without specifying the authority upon which he details them.

‘ This adieu was performed with all those simple and striking ceremonials which rustic sentiment has devised to prolong tender emotions and to inspire awe. The lovers stood on each side of a small purling brook ; they laved their hands in its limpid stream, and holding a bible between them, pronounced their vows to be faithful to each other. They parted—never to meet again !

‘ The anniversary of *Mary Campbell’s* death (for that was her name), awakening in the sensitive mind of *Burns* the most lively emotion, he retired from his family, then residing on the farm of Ellisland, and wandered, solitary, on the banks of the Nith, and about the farm yard, in the extremest agitation of mind, nearly the whole of the night : His agitation was so great, that he threw himself on the side of a corn stack, and there conceived his sublime and tender elegy—his address *To Mary in Heaven*.’

The poem itself is as follows.

'Thou lingering star, with less'ning ray,  
That lov'st to greet the early morn,  
Again thou usher'st in the day  
My Mary from my soul was torn.

'O Mary ! dear departed shade !  
Where is thy place of blissful rest ?  
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid ?  
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast ?

'That sacred hour can I forget,  
Can I forget the hallowed grove,  
Where by the Winding Ayr we met,  
To live one day of parting love !

'Eternity will not efface  
Those records dear of transports past ;  
Thy image at our last embrace ;  
Ah ! little thought we 'twas our last !

'Ayr gurgling kissed his pebbled shore,  
O'erhung with wild woods, thickening, green ;  
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,  
Twin'd amorous round the raptured scene.

'The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,  
The birds sang love on every spray,  
'Till too, too soon, the glowing west  
Proclaim'd the speed of winged day.

'Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,  
And fondly broods with miser care !  
Time but the impression stronger makes,  
As streams their channels deeper wear.

'My Mary, dear departed shade !  
Where is thy place of blissful rest ?  
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid ?  
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast ?

The following elegant lines were sent with a Bouquet, to a lady, by the unfortunate Joseph Gerald, who was sentenced by the Court of Justiciary of Scotland to transportation for fourteen years, for sedition.

"THOUGH from thy bank of velvet borne  
Hang not, fair flow'r ! thy drooping crest ;  
Maria's bosom thou shalt find  
The softest, sweetest bed of rest.

Though from mild Zephyr's kiss no more  
Ambrosial balm's thou shalt inhale—  
Her gentle breath, whene'er she sighs,  
Shall fan thee with a purer gale.

But be thou thankful for that bliss  
For which in vain my heart does burn ;  
And, as thou stealest sweets from her,  
Give back thy choicest in return."

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#### EPIGRAM.

*On a battle between two famous Pugilists.*

BEHOLD, great king, at Fate's command,  
(Thus sung the leader of the band)  
Where sleeps poor old Darius !  
*On the bare earth expos'd he lies,*  
*Without a friend to close his eyes—*  
When dead, none e'er come nigh us.

Poor Pagans, ignorant and rude !  
Thank heaven ! such base ingratitude  
Our Christian age can't sully :  
*Gregson, to thee, kind fate supplies*  
*A pious friend to close thy eyes,*  
And that dear friend is—*Gulley* !